

The Romance of Elaine

SEQUEL TO THE EXPLOITS OF ELAINE

A Detective Novel
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SYNOPSIS.

The morning after the finding of Wu Fang's body and Kennedy's disappearance, a submarine appears on the bay. Marcus Del Mar plunges overboard from it and swims ashore. His mission is to obtain information of Kennedy and recover the lost documents. At the Dodge home he soon wins the confidence of Elaine. Later she is warned by the little old man to be careful of Del Mar just in time to prevent Del Mar from carrying out his plans. Del Mar at last succeeds in getting the documents, only to have them destroyed by the little old man. Jameson is captured by a "radio detective" on his way to mail letters to the U. S. secret service. Elaine rescues him. Lieutenant Woodward and his friend, Professor Arnold, attend a party given at the Dodge home, where, unknowingly, Del Mar drops a note which gives Elaine a clue. In her attempt to prevent his cutting the Atlantic cable she is discovered and made a prisoner of the boat, which afterwards is wrecked by Woodward and Arnold. Jameson, in a hydro-aeroplane, saves Elaine from drowning. Elaine, disguised as a man, discovers the entrance of Del Mar's wireless cave at almost the same time Arnold, by a "radio detective," has discovered the wireless station. Elaine's discovery nearly proves fatal; she is saved by Jameson, but Arnold and Woodward in destroying the wireless station, but Del Mar escapes. In a deserted hotel in the woods, he directs the making of a number of gas bombs. Elaine discovers Del Mar's man at work, is captured, but escapes. When the hotel is later attacked the men retreat to the woods, where they explode the gas bombs, nearly causing the death of Lieutenant Woodward and his attacking party. Elaine receives a package which contains a new secret light gun from an unknown friend. Jameson and Elaine prove the accuracy of the new weapon. While motorizing with Jameson, Elaine discovers a bomb placed there by one of Del Mar's men for assassination. They take it to Lieutenant Woodward who sends them to Professor Arnold, his friend. They are backed by Del Mar and his men. The searchlight gun saves Elaine and Jameson who reach the shore. Del Mar appears on the bay with a submarine and destroys the yacht with a torpedo, only to find that Professor Arnold and his party have escaped.

THIRTY-THIRD EPISODE THE LURE OF THE MODISTE.

Early one morning a very handsome woman of the adventurist type arrived with several trunks at the big summer hotel just outside the town, the St. Germain.

Among the many fashionable people at the watering place, however, she attracted no great attention, and in the forenoon she quietly went in her motor for a ride.

It was Madame Larenz, one of Del Mar's secret agents, who, up to this time, had been engaged in spying on wealthy and impressive American manufacturers.

Her riding brought her finally to the bungalow of Del Mar, and there she was admitted in a manner that showed that Del Mar trusted her highly.

"Now," he instructed, after a few minutes' chat, "I want you to get acquainted with Miss Dodge. She's quite human. Pretty gowns appeal to her. Get her to the St. Germain. Then I'll tell you what to do."

A few minutes later the woman left in her car, so rapidly driven that no one would recognize her.

It was early in the afternoon that Aunt Josephine was sitting on the veranda when an automobile drove up and a very stylishly gowned and bonneted woman stepped out.

"Good afternoon," she greeted Aunt Josephine ingratiatingly, as she approached the house. "I am Madame Larenz of New York and Paris. Perhaps you have heard of my shops on Fifth avenue and the Rue de la Paix."

Aunt Josephine had heard the name, though she did not know that this woman had assumed it without being in any way connected with the places she mentioned.

"I'm establishing a new sort of summer service at the better resorts," the woman explained. "You see, my men find it annoying to go into the city for gowns. So I am bringing the latest Paris models out to them. Is Miss Dodge at home?"

"I think she is playing tennis," returned Aunt Josephine.

"Oh, yes, I see her, thank you," the woman murmured, moving toward the tennis court back of the house.

Elaine and I had agreed to play a couple of games, and were tossing rackets for position.

"Very well," laughed Elaine, as she won the toss, "take the other court."

It was a cool day, and I felt in good spirits. Just to see whether I could do it still, I jumped over the net.

Our game had scarcely started when we were interrupted by the approach of a stunning looking woman.

"Miss Dodge?" she greeted. "Will you excuse me a moment?"

Elaine paused in serving the ball and the woman handed her a card from her delicate gold mesh bag. It read simply:

MME. LARENZ
PARIS

Gowns. Elaine looked at the card a moment while the woman repeated what she had already told Aunt Josephine.

"You have them here, then?" queried Elaine, interested.

"Yes, I have some very exclusive models which I am showing at my suite in the St. Germain."

"Oh, how lovely!" exclaimed Elaine. "I must see them."

was destined never to be finished. More weighty matters were under discussion.

I wondered what they were talking about and, suppressing a yawn, I walked toward them. As I approached I heard scattered remarks about styles and dress fabrics.

Elaine had completely forgotten tennis and me. She took a couple of steps away from the court with the woman as I came up.

"Aren't you going to play?" I asked. "I know you'll excuse me, Walter," smiled Elaine. "My frocks are all so frightfully out of date. And here's a chance to get new ones, very reasonably, too."

They walked off, and I could not help scowling at the visitor. On toward the house Elaine and Madame Larenz proceeded, and around it to the front porch, where Aunt Josephine was standing.

"Just think, auntie," cried Elaine, "real Paris gowns down here without the trouble of going to the city—and cheaply, too."

Aunt Josephine was only mildly interested, but that did not seem to worry Madame Larenz.

"I shall be glad to see you at three, Miss Dodge," she said, as she got into her car again and drove off.

When I came down I found Aunt Josephine still on the veranda. In addition to my horse, which I had telephoned for, Elaine's little runabout had been driven to the door. While I was talking to Aunt Josephine, Elaine came downstairs and walked over to the car.

"May I go with you?" I pleaded. "No, Walter," she replied, laughing merrily. "You can't go. I want to try them on."

Properly squelched, I retreated. Elaine drove away, and a moment later I mounted and cantered off leisurely.

Near Del Mar's bungalow might have been seen again the mysterious naturalist, walking along the road with a butterfly net in his hand, and what appeared to be a leather specimen case, perhaps six inches long, under his other arm.

As Madame Larenz whizzed past in her car, he looked up keenly, in spite of his seeming near-sightedness and huge smoked glasses. He watched her closely, noting the number of the car, then turned and followed it.

Madam Larenz drew up, a second time, before Del Mar's. As she got out and entered the naturalist, having quickened his pace, came up and watched her go in. Then, after taking in the situation for a moment, he made his way around the side of the bungalow.

"Is Mr. Del Mar at home?" inquired Madame Larenz, as the valet ushered her into the library.

"No, madam," he returned. "Mr. Del Mar is out. But he left word that if you came before he got back you were to leave word."

The woman sat down at the desk and wrote hastily. When she had finished the short note she read it over and folded it up.

"Tell Mr. Del Mar I've left a note here on his desk," she said to the valet.

A moment later she left the library, followed by the valet, who accompanied her to her car, and assisted her in.

"The hotel," she directed to her driver, as she started off, while the valet returned to the bungalow.

Outside, the naturalist had come through the shrubbery and had been looking in at the library window, watching every move of Madame Larenz as she wrote. As she went out he paused just a second to look about. Then he drew a long knife from his pocket, forced the window catch, and quickly climbed into the room.

Directly to the desk he went and hurriedly ran over the papers to it. There was the note. He picked it up and read it eagerly.

"My apartment—St. Germain—3 p. m.—Larenz."

For a moment he seemed to consider what to do. Then he replaced the note. Suddenly he heard the sound of footsteps. It was the valet returning. Quickly the naturalist ran to the window and jumped out.

A moment later the valet entered the library again. "That's strange," he exclaimed, under his breath; "I don't recall opening that window over there today."

He looked puzzled. But as no one was about he went over and shut it.

Some distance down the road the naturalist quietly emerged in safety from the bushes. With scarcely a moment's hesitation, his mind thoroughly made up to his course, he hurried along the road.

Meanwhile, at the St. Germain, Madame Larenz entered and passed through the rotunda of the hotel, followed by many admiring glances of the men.

Up in her room stood several large trunks, open. From them she had taken a number of gowns which were scattered about or hung up for exhibition.

As she entered, quickly she selected one of the trunks whose contents were more smart than the rest, and laid the gowns out most fetchingly about the room.

In the office of the hotel a few moments later the naturalist entered. He looked about curiously, then went over to the desk and glanced over the register. At the name "Madame Larenz, Paris, Room 22," he paused.

For some seconds he stood thinking. Then he deliberately walked over to a leather chair and took a prominent seat near by in the lobby. He had discarded his net, but still had the case, which now he had shoved into his pocket. From a table he picked up a newspaper.

It was not long before Del Mar pulled up before the hotel and entered in his usual swagger manner. He had returned to the bungalow, read the note, and hurried over to the St. Germain.

He crossed the lobby, back to the office. As he did so the naturalist had his face hidden deeply in the open newspaper. But no sooner had Del Mar passed than the newspaper fell unappreciated, and he gazed after him, as he left the lobby by the back way.

It was only a few minutes after she had completed arranging her small stock so that it looked quite impressive, that Madame Larenz heard a knock at the door and recognized Del Mar's secret code. She opened the door and he strode in.

"I got your note," he said, briefly, coming directly to business and telling her just what he wanted done. "Let me see," he concluded, glancing at his watch. "It is after three now. She ought to be here any minute."

Outside, Elaine drove up to the rather garish entrance of the St. Germain, and one of the boys in uniform ran forward to open the door and take charge of the car. She too, crossed the lobby without seeing the old naturalist, though nothing escaped him.

As she passed he started to rise and cross toward her, then appeared to change his mind.

Elaine went on out through the back of the lobby, directed by a boy, and mounted a flight of stairs in preference to taking the lift to the second, or sort of mezzanine floor. Down along the corridor she went, hunting

for number twenty-two. At last she found it at the end and knocked.

Del Mar and Madame Larenz were still talking in low tones when they heard a light tap on the door.

"There she is now," whispered Larenz.

"All right; let her in," answered Del Mar, leaning quietly to a closet. "I'll hide here until I get the signal. Do just as I told you."

Outside, at the same time, according to his carefully concocted plans, Del Mar's car had driven up and stopped close to the side of the hotel, which was on a slight hill that brought the street level here not so far below the second story windows. Three of his most trusted men were in the car.

Madame Larenz opened the door. "Oh, I'm so glad you came," she rattled on to Elaine. "You see, I've got to get started. Not a customer yet. But if you'll only take a few gowns, other people will come to me. I'll let you have them cheaply, too. Just look at this one."

She held up one slim, creamy creation that looked like a delicate flower. "I'd like to try it on," cried Elaine, fingering it rapturously.

"By all means," agreed Madame Larenz. "We are alone. Do so."

With deft fingers, Larenz helped her take off her own very pretty dress. As Elaine slipped the soft gown over her head, with her head and arms engaged in its multitudinous folds, Madame Larenz, a powerful woman, seized her. Elaine was effectually gagged and bound in the gown itself.

Instantly Del Mar flung himself from the closet, disguising his voice. Together they wrapped the dress about Elaine even more tightly to prevent her screaming.

Madame Larenz seized a blanket and threw that over Elaine's head also, while Del Mar ran to the window. There were her men in the car, waiting below.

"Are you ready?" he called softly to them.

They looked about carefully. There was no one on that side of the hotel just at the moment.

"Ready," responded one. "Quick!" Together Del Mar and Madame Larenz passed Elaine, ineffectually struggling, out of the window. The men seized her and placed her in the bottom of the car, which was covered. Then they shot away, taking a back road up the hill.

Hurriedly the naturalist went through the lobby in the direction Elaine had gone, and a moment later reached the corridor above.

Down it, he could hear someone coming out of room 22. He slid into an angle and hid.

It was Del Mar and the woman he had seen at the bungalow. They passed by without discovering him, nor could he make out anything that they said. What mischief was afoot? Where was Elaine?

He ran to the door and tried it. It was locked. Quickly he took from his pocket a skeleton key and unlocked it. There was Elaine's hat and dress lying in a heap on the bed. But she was not there. He was now thoroughly alarmed.

She could not have passed him in the hall. Therefore she must have gone or been taken out through the window. That would never have been voluntary, especially leaving her there.

The window was still open. He ran to it. One glance out was enough. He leaped to the ground. Sure enough there were automobile tracks in the dust.

"Del Mar's car!" he muttered to himself, studying them.

He fairly ran around the side of the hotel. There he came suddenly upon Elaine's car standing alone, and recognized it.

There was no time for fear. He jumped into it and let the swift little racer out as he turned and gathered momentum to shoot up the hill on high speed.

Meanwhile, I had been joggling along through the country, lonely and disconsolate. I don't know how it happened, but I suppose it was by some subconscious desire. At any rate, I found myself at the road that came out across one leading to the St. Germain, and it occurred to me that

key was unavailing to slide the bolt. Seconds were precious.

Quickly he went to the corner of the house. There was a water pipe. He began to climb it, risking its precarious support.

On the roof at last, the naturalist crawled along, looking for some way of getting into the house. But he could not seem to find any. Carefully he crawled to the edge of the roof and looked over. Below he could hear sounds, but could make nothing of them.

From his pocket he took the leather case and opened it. There was a peculiar arrangement, like some of the collapsible arms on which telephone instruments are often fastened to a desk or wall, capable of being collapsed into small space or of being extended for some distance. On the thing was arranged a system of mirrors, which the naturalist adjusted.

It was a pocket periscope.

He thrust the thing over the edge of the roof and down, and looked through it. Below, he could see into the room from which came the peculiar sounds.

He looked anxiously. There he could see Elaine endeavoring still to loosen the cords and unable to do so. Only for a moment he looked. Then he folded up the pocket periscope in the case and shoved it back into his pocket. Quickly he crossed the roof again and slid down the rain-pipe.

At the door stood three of Del Mar's men waiting for Del Mar who had told them he would follow immediately.

The naturalist had by this time reached the ground and was going along carefully back to the house. He drew his revolver and, pointing it down, fired. Then he dodged back of an extension and disappeared for the moment.

Instantly the three men sprang up and ran toward the spot where it seemed the shot had been fired. There was no one about the side of the house. But the wind had carried the smoke into some bushes beside the grove, and they crashed into the bushes, beating about.

At the same time, the naturalist, having first waited until he saw which way the men were going, dashed about the house in the opposite direction. Then he slipped, unopposed and unobserved, in through the open front door, up the stairs and along to the room into which he had just been looking.

He unlocked the door and entered. Elaine was still struggling with the cords when she caught sight of the stranger.

"Not a word!" he cautioned under his breath.

She was indeed too frightened to cry out. Quickly he loosened her, still holding his finger to his lips to enjoin silence.

"Follow me!" he whispered.

She obeyed mechanically, and then went out into the hall. On downstairs went the naturalist, Elaine still keeping close after him.

He looked out through the front door, then drew back. Quickly he went through the lower hall until he came to the back door in the kitchen, Elaine following. He unbolts the door and opened it.

"Run," he said, simply, pointing out of the door. "They're coming back the other way. I'll hold them."

She needed no further urging, but darted from the house as he closed the door after her.

It was just at this point that Del Mar came riding along the main road on horseback. He pulled up suddenly as he saw a car run in alongside the road.

"That's Elaine's runabout," he muttered, as he dismounted and tied his horse.

"How came it here?" He approached the car, much worried by its unaccountable presence there instead of before the St. Germain. Then he drew his gun and hurried up the side road.

He heard a shot and quickened his pace. In the woods unexpectedly he came upon his three men still beating about, searching with drawn revolvers for the person who had fired the shot.

"Well?" he demanded, sharply. "What's all this?"

"Someone fired a shot," they explained, somewhat crestfallen.

"It was a trick, you fools," he answered testily. "Get back to your prisoner."

Without a word they turned and hurried toward the house, Del Mar following. "You two go in," he ordered the foremost. "I'll go around the house with Patrick."

As Del Mar and the other man ran around the corner they could just catch a fleeting glimpse of someone disappearing into the trees.

It was Elaine.

The man hurried forward, blazing away with his gun.

Running, breathless, Elaine heard the shot behind her which Del Mar's man had fired in his eagerness. The bullet struck a tree near her with a "ping!" She glanced back and saw the man. But she did not stop. Instead she redoubled her efforts, running zigzag in among the trees where they were thickest.

Del Mar, a little bit behind his man where she could not recognize him, urged the man on, following carefully.

On fled Elaine, her heart beating fast. Suddenly she stopped, and almost cried out in vexation. A stream blocked her retreat—a stream swift and deep.

She looked back, terrified. Her pursuers were coming ahead fast now in her direction. Wildly she gazed around. There was a canoe on the bank. In an instant she jumped in, untied it and seized the paddle.

Off she went, striking for the opposite shore. But the current was raging swiftly, and she was already tired

and exhausted. She could scarcely make any headway at all in the fierce eddies. But at least, she thought bravely, she was getting farther and farther away from them down stream.

Up above, Del Mar and his man came to the edge of the water. There they stood for a moment looking down. "There she is," pointed the man.

Del Mar raised his revolver and fired.

Suddenly a bullet struck Elaine's paddle and broke it. Clutching the useless splintered shaft, she was now at the mercy of the current, swept along like a piece of driftwood.

She looked about frantically. What was that roaring noise?

It was the waterfalls ahead!

In the meantime Del Mar's other two men had entered the house and had run upstairs, knowing well his wrath if anything had happened. As they did so, the naturalist poked his head cautiously out of the kitchen where he had been hiding and saw them. Then he followed noiselessly his revolver ready.

Heading they ran into the room where they had left Elaine. She was gone!

Before they could turn the naturalist locked the door, turned, and took the steps down, two at a time.

Then he ran out of the front door and into the woods at an angle to the direction taken by Elaine, turning and going down hill, where a rapid, swollen stream curved about through a gorge. As he reached the stream he heard a shot above.

He looked up. There was Elaine, swept down toward him. Below he knew the stream tumbled over a tall cataract into the gorge below.

What could he do?

A sudden crackling of the twigs caused him to turn and catch sight of me, just coming up.

For, as best I could on horseback, I had followed Elaine's car until at last I saw that it had been abandoned. Thoroughly alarmed, I rode on past a deserted house, until suddenly I heard a shot and a scream. It seemed to come from below me, and I leaped off my horse, making for it as fast as I could, racing toward a stream whose roar I could hear.

There on the bank I came upon a queer old coddler, looking about wildly. Was he the automobile thief? I ran forward, ready to seize him. But as I did so he whirled about, and with a strength remarkable in one so old, seized my wrist before I could get his.

"Look!" he cried simply, pointing up the stream.

I did. A girl in a canoe was coming down toward the falls, screaming, her paddle broken and useless. My heart leaped into my mouth. It was Elaine!

"Come!" he panted eagerly to me, "I can save her. You must do just as I say."

He pointed to an overhanging rock near by and we ran to it.

By this time Elaine was almost upon us, each second getting nearer the veritable maelstrom above the falls.

From the rock overhung also a tree at the very edge of the water.

There was nothing to do but obey him. Above, though we did not see them, Del Mar and his man were gloating over the result of their work. But they were gloating too soon. We came to the rock and the tree.

"Here," cried the new-found friend, "I'll get hold of the tree and then hold you."

Instantly he threw himself on his stomach, hooking his leg about the tree trunk. I crawled out over the ledge of slippery rock to the very edge and looked over. It was the only chance.

The old naturalist seized my legs in his hands. I slid down the rock, letting myself go.

Literally, his presence of mind had invented what was really a life chain, a human rope.

On came the canoe, Elaine in it as white as death, crying out and trying to stop or guide it as, nearer and nearer, though the smooth, worn walls of the chasm, it whirled to the falls.

With a grip of steel the naturalist held to the tree, which away and bent, while also he held me, as if in a vise, head down.

On came Elaine—directly at us. She stood up and balanced herself—a dangerous feat in a canoe at any time, but doubly so in those dark, swirling, treacherous waters.

"Steady!" I encouraged. "Grab my arms!"

As the canoe reached us she gave a little jump and seized my forearms. Her hands slipped, but I grasped her own arms, and we held each other.

The momentum of her body was great. For an instant I thought we were all going over. But the naturalist held his grip and slowly began to pull himself and us up the slippery rock.

A second later the canoe crashed over the falls in a cloud of spray and pounding water.

As we reached the bank above the rock I almost lifted Elaine and set her down, trembling, as gasping for breath. Before either of us knew it the queer old fellow had plunged into the bushes and was gone without another word.

"Walter," she cried, "call him back. I must tell him how much I owe him—my life!"

But he had disappeared, absolutely. We shouted after him. It was of no use.

"Well, what do you think of that?" cried Elaine. "He saved my life—then didn't wait even to be thanked."

Who was he?

We looked at each other a moment. But neither of us spoke what was in our hearts.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THING THAT MIGHT HAPPEN

Skeptical, However, Will Want Affidavit That Old College Chums Took Only One Drink.

"Well, of all things that live and breathe, if it isn't my old college chum, Bill Edworthy!"

With these few well-chosen words, a tall, well-built young fellow slapped another W. B. Y. F. in the small of his back with such a resounding smack as to almost put his lights out. Even a blind baggage car could see that the young men were old college chums.

"Ding my slats," said Bill Edworthy, the young man who had been struck; "if it isn't Harry Allison, the stroke oar of the class of union-steen. Well, if you aren't a good sight for tangled lamps."

"Why," continued Henry, "it must be 'teen years since I met you at the last alumni dinner. How's things?"

"Fine. Say, do you remember the night when we got it up and came down with the chickens?"

"Sure do. Sort of a stewed chicken-pox. Well, I've got about five minutes to spare. Let's drop into this cafe and have just one drink."

So the two college chums who